

Course Prospectus

For THL 416 General Epistles and Revelation

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Overview

The general epistles (also called the Catholic Epistles) are a set of seven letters in the New Testament anciently placed between Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Paul. "Epistle" simply means a formal letter. The General Epistles are technically part of the historical writings (Acts of the Apostles and the General Epistles) as preserved anciently in a single scroll. Before the writing of the book of Revelation, the New Testament consisted of three rolls—the memoirs of the apostles (the Gospels), the historical writings (Acts and the General Epistles), and the Epistles of Paul (fourteen epistles addressed in three parts, that is letters to seven specific congregations, a letter to the church-at-large, and letters to the ministry).

Revelation (a single roll and the final book in the New Testament) deals with the events of the Day of the Lord, the time of God's judgments and plagues upon sin at the end of the age, climaxing in the Second Coming of Christ.

In this course, you will encounter information concerning the New Testament and some issues and matters not dealt with elsewhere in the New Testament. The General Epistles tell of an apostasy occurring in the late first century leading to a great false form of Christianity we know of as Greco-Roman Orthodox Christianity in Greek and Latin forms. In Revelation, we are told the impact of this false church on the people of God and its actions and fruits through its ultimate demise and destruction at the end of the age.

Moreover, here you should find an opportunity to hone your critical thinking skills and aptitudes in discerning and understanding the teachings of God's Word. This course should provide you with a deeper comprehension of the historical and prophetic content of the New Testament through scholarly information and presentations.

Course catalog description

This course introduces the historical setting, purpose, and central theme of the letters of James, Peter, John, and Jude and the book of Revelation. Emphasis is on the use of critical, historical, archeological, and cultural analysis. Upon completion, students should be able to use analysis tools to read, understand, explain, and expound on these biblical writings.

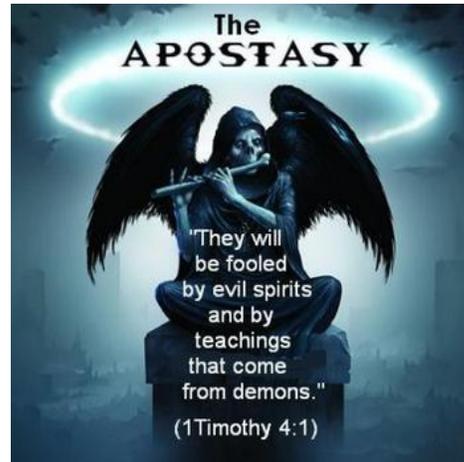
Prerequisites and corequisites

Prerequisites: THL 136.

Corequisites: None.

Course credit

Three (3) semester hours.



The Apostle Paul warned of false teachers but by the time Jude wrote his epistle a great apostasy was in full swing. Church historian Jesse Lyman Hurlbut rightly described the ultimate result: "fifty years after St. Paul's life a curtain hangs over the church, through which we strive vainly to look; and when at last it rises, about 120 A.D. with the writings of the earliest church fathers, we find a church in many respects very different from that in the days of St. Peter and St. Paul" (*The Story of the Christian Church*, 1970 edition, page 33).

Instructional objectives

On completion of this course, a student should be able to:

1. Describe the character of Christianity in Asia Minor late in the first century C.E.;
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the author, background, theme and content of each of the General Epistles and the book of Revelation, and discuss key points subject to textual criticism;
3. Discuss concepts contained in the book of Revelation and each epistle that relate to understanding the history and development of the NT Church of God and its doctrines;
4. State and demonstrate each author's teaching, including his views on Christian living, on various doctrines and themes contained in the book of Revelation and each of his epistles;
5. Show a basic understanding of the book of Revelation, within the framework of biblical prophecy as it relates to other passages in the Old and New Testaments, and discuss the events leading to the Day of the Lord, the establishment of the Kingdom of God, and Final Judgment;
6. Apply the above in a coherent understanding of the relevance and challenge of John's vision for the 21st century; and
7. State the definition of basic terms.

Your Instructors

The instructor of record for this course is Kenneth L. Frank, Jr. To contact him on course details and issues please use the email feature in the e-learning system (Populi) or kfrank@livinguniv.com. His telephone is 704-708-2296.

Kenneth L. Frank, Jr. was born and raised in New Jersey, USA where he attended Monmouth College (now Monmouth University) for one year majoring in history and government. Following that, he attended the three campuses of Ambassador College in Big Sandy, Texas, USA; Bricket Wood, England; and Pasadena, California, USA. In the summer of 1971, he participated in an archaeological project jointly sponsored by Ambassador College and Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Upon graduation from Ambassador College with a Bachelor of Arts in Theology, he trained for the ministry in Canada and was ordained an elder in 1975. He pastored Canadian congregations in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Ontario for twenty-six years before returning to the United States where he served as a Living Church of God pastor. He is married, father of four children (one of whom is a LU faculty member) and grandfather of seven. In 2014, he earned a Master of Arts degree in Christian Studies with an Emphasis in Pastoral Ministry at Grand Canyon University. Presently, he serves at the Living University campus as teacher, Registrar and Director of Admissions.



The recorded lectures are by Dr. Michael P. Germano, who has over forty years of professional experience in college-level administration, education and corporate law. He served as a dean and vice president for Ambassador College (Pasadena, California) and University (Big Sandy, Texas) and as Vice President for Instruction to Haywood Community College (Clyde, North Carolina). In addition to earned doctorates in education and law, he completed graduate studies in theology and anthropology at Southern Methodist University and has a master's degree in archaeology/anthropology from TAMU (College Station, Texas).

He held responsibilities in Ambassador University's involvement in archaeological excavations at the south Temple Mount directed by Benjamin Mazar, the Umm el-Jimal Project directed by Bert de Vries, the Mozan Expedition directed by Giorgio Buccellati and Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati, and the Hazor Excavations in memory of Yigael Yadin directed by Amnon Ben-Tor. His research focus has been on early church history and archaeology.



Based on his research in Jerusalem he presented a paper, "The Ancient Church of the Apostles: Revisiting Jerusalem's Cenacle and David's Tomb," to the Near Eastern Archaeological Society (NEAS) and has a book in preparation detailing the history of the first era of the Church (31-135 CE) entitled *The First Christians: History, Myths and Traditions of the Apostolic Church*.

Ordained in 1983, Dr. Germano is an elder in the Living Church of God and serves as President of Living University.

Course Protocols

Technology access

This course requires web access. You also have to have an established email account. The Adobe Acrobat Reader is necessary to view documents that are PDF files. If you do not already have it, you may download the free Adobe Acrobat reader at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>, which you may then install and use to access PDF documents on this site.

Students with disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please inform your instructor (on the course "Info" page, click on the instructor's name and then select "Send Email").

Attendance in this course

One of the most vital aspects of the college and university experience is attendance and punctuality in the learning environment. Regularity of attendance is necessary for students to derive maximum benefit from a course and to maintain a satisfactory academic record, whether in an online course or in an on-campus course. We have noticed that students who fall behind in their coursework typically drop out. Therefore, we highly encourage you to complete your assignments on time, as we want you to succeed. Remember Ecclesiastes 9:10: "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, where you go."

Please be aware that all students who fall behind in an online course and do not complete twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the total assignments and other required activities for a course, on or before "Last day to withdraw from a course" as set forth in the University Academic Calendar, will receive a grade of "W" for it. After that date, the grade will be a "WF" and counted in a student's GPA. Moreover, an

instructor may drop a student from a course whenever the instructor concludes that a student's class attendance or punctuality endangers the student's success or places other students at risk.

Withdrawing from or dropping this course

It is the responsibility of a student to drop a course if he or she cannot meet the requirements of the course. Any student who stops attending a course without officially withdrawing from it risks receiving a punitive grade for that course. A student who finds it necessary to drop a course after the Late Registration (Drop/Add) Period must notify the Registrar's Office in writing. Please note the following:

- If a student drops a course on or before the "Last day to withdraw from a course without a grade penalty" as published in the University Academic Calendar, even if his or her work is not of a passing grade, then a "W" is recorded.
- If a course is dropped after that date, but before the last 21 calendar days of the semester, then the instructor determines the grade. The faculty member will at this time record a grade of "W" if passing (not computed in GPA) or "WF" if failing (computed in GPA).
- Students who drop a course, yet remain in one or more other courses during the last 18 calendar days of the semester, will receive a grade of "WF."
- Students who completely withdraw from the University at any time during the semester may be given a grade of "W" on all courses.

If students do not initiate the withdrawal process, the instructor is required to initiate the administrative process and to record a grade of "W" or "WF" for the course depending on the date the faculty member drops the student from the course. Students who register for a course as an audit, but then withdraw will be assigned a grade of "W" for the course.

Terms and phrases

Each lesson includes a set of terms and phrases for you to learn. This exercise is to help you develop and expand your biblical and theological vocabulary as you proceed through the seven core lessons, and to help you focus on the context of the content you are reading. Examinations will specifically test your mastery of the basic terminology of this course. Many students find looking over vocabulary words just as they go to bed at night and as they arise in the morning helps commit them to memory. Be sure to review your definitions before an examination.

For some terms and phrases, we have given a scriptural link. We selected the NKJ, the New King James Version, as our default for scriptural text. When alternate scriptures appear we provide the appropriate link as NASB, KJV, RSV, NIV, and the like.

Study tips

Distance learning emphasizes self-motivation. Your instructor functions as a facilitator with you as the driving force in mastering course content. Do not put off completing your readings and assignments. While there are many different learning styles the following strategy should serve the needs of most students.

- Look over assigned readings.
- Read the assigned readings making notes before viewing the assigned lecture.
- Define terms in the assignment. The exams will specifically test basic terminology. Develop your biblical and theology vocabulary as you proceed lesson by lesson.
- As you view lectures complete your notes.

- Complete your answers for the discussion forum and writing assignment.
- Each week review your notes, geographical terms and locations, and the words you defined.
- If you have a question, ask. Questions should arise in the teaching-learning process. By bringing questions to our attention, you not only acquire assistance but you also maintain the interaction necessary in higher education. Use the email feature in Populi to send your questions.

Textbooks

Students may order their books through the University Bookstore. Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble also are excellent sources of new and used books. The books used or referred to in this course are commercial publications. They represent the views and ideas of their authors, editors, and publishers. Living University does not endorse these texts nor vouch for their accuracy. We simply employ them in helping you master the content of the course.

Required Textbooks

Elwell, Walter A., and Robert W. Yarbrough. *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013.

Radmacher, Earl D., Ronald B. Allen, and H. Wayne House. *The New King James Study Bible*, 2nd Edition. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007 (available in various print and digital editions).

Course Requirements

Due dates and extensions

Be sure to submit your assignments by the posted due dates to avoid grade penalties. Students must complete the course by the last official day of instruction as set forth in the academic calendar.

Icebreaker assignment

For-credit students must complete an icebreaker assignment. For credit, you will need to post at least three comments, consisting of your short autobiography and two comments on the autobiographies of other students. The purposes of this icebreaker assignment are for you to introduce yourself to your classmates, to verify your enrollment in this course, and to promote student interaction.

Simply tell the class about yourself and your goals and comment on two other students' Icebreaker postings. This is not the place for a profession of faith, or the details your conversion experience, or problems you have had with previous fellowships, as that information is more of a private nature. Here you inform your classmates what you would like them to know about you. As we have people from all over the world enrolled in this course, each autobiography will help us know, understand and appreciate each other.

The icebreaker assignment is due by the eighth day of the semester (check the Assignments page for date). By getting your icebreaker assignment posted on time you earn points. These points could make the difference between an A or a B, or passing or not passing. Post your autobiography as a reply to the "Icebreaker topic on the course discussion forum. On this assignment, there is no credit granted for postings made after the deadline. Students who do not post their autobiography before the end of the

Late Registration (Drop/Add) period officially become "No Show" students and they forfeit their registration in this course.

Reading assignments

Reading assignments are integrated into the eight lesson web pages of the course in the Populi system.

Viewing assignments

This course includes lectures by faculty and guests. Links to lectures will be placed within the lessons.

Discussion forums

Each student will have the opportunity to post online comments to a forum question for each lesson. This will enable students to interact with each other and with the instructor.

Writing assignments

Each lesson will include Writing Assignments that will involve writing essays. All writing assignments in this course should follow MLA 8 format, common to many universities. Documents and links to learn this format are provided in the course. Please cite your sources and use quotation marks where needed. The Files feature on the Assignment Submission page lets you submit your work so your instructor can have it handy for download, review and grading. The way to post an assignment is by attachment so that its format will not be corrupted.

Research paper

Your task is to write a doctrinal history of God's church from Paul's death in about AD 68 through John's death near the end of the first century, dealing primarily with the theological challenges the church faced in these years as described by the General Epistles and the first three chapters of Revelation. The paper should be 6-7 pages, not counting the Works Cited page. Most of your sources should be those other than our class textbooks and materials. Be sure to give credit to your sources with internal citations and by using quotation marks as appropriate. Write your research paper using MLA 8 format and include a Works Cited page.

Quizzes and examinations

Lessons 1-7 have an associated online quiz of several questions. They are open book quizzes. A quiz should help you master the material in the assignment. It also provides you with practice in test taking. There are three exams – Exam 3 is to be proctored.

The **three exams** discussed below draw heavily but not exclusively from the quizzes. Therefore, it is important for you to understand and commit the quiz material to memory. **Exam 3 is to be proctored.** Use the Proctor's Signature Form (PSF) located under the Files menu on the Exam 3 page. These exams have time limits and are closed book tests to be taken online. You have only one opportunity to complete an exam. As Living University students do not cheat, steal or lie, we rely on our students' integrity during these examinations.

Course evaluation

We welcome your input for improving this course. Making suggestions to us by email is helpful. Our goal in this course is to facilitate the successful achievement of all instructional objectives by all students. At the end of the course, you will have the opportunity of assessing the course. We want to make distance-learning courses as effective as we can. We may also ask some other questions concerning your experience in

distance learning to help us improve our program. We appreciate your letting us know how we can improve our products and services for you and other distance learners.

Always keep a copy of your work for this course.

Grading

Your course grade will be determined based on the number of points you have earned over the semester as follows:

- Icebreaker Assignment (25 points)
- Discussions (7 worth 30 points each, 210 points)
- Writing Assignments (8 worth 25 points each, 200 points)
- Quizzes (7 worth 30 points each, 210 points)
- Exams (three, each worth 90 points, for a total of 270 points; proctored (Exam 3), online, closed-book and closed-notes)
- Research Paper (60 points)
- Course Evaluation (25 points)
- Total 1,000 points**

By getting your icebreaker assignment posted on time you earn points. These points could make the difference between an A or a B, or passing or not passing.

Grades are assigned in the traditional American style of an A, B, C, D, or F. In distance learning we believe that mastery of the subject matter is achieved when a student can demonstrate that they have achieved 80% of the objectives for a course. That means that we want you to earn at least 800 points in this course. If you do not do so, then you have not developed the mastery we would like you to have. We want this course to be competency-based and so it is possible for the entire class to receive an A or a B. There is no artificial curving of scores in the assignment of grades. Also, do not go on a guilt trip if you get a C. That is an honorable grade, but if you receive a D or below, then you might want to retake the course. Mastery of the material is what your goal should be.

Grades are assigned by points as follows:

- A 900-1000 points
- B 800-899 points
- C 700-799 points
- D 600-699 points
- F Below 600 points

Proctored exams

Three online exams (Exam 3 is proctored) are required in this course. A proctored exam is one that is overseen by an impartial individual (called a proctor) who monitors or supervises a student while he or she is taking an exam. The proctor ensures the security and integrity of the exam process. The proctoring process helps assure that the student who takes a proctored examination in a course is the same person

who enrolled in the course and that examination results reflect the student's own knowledge and competency.

Students should present valid government-issued photo identification to their proctor before taking an exam to confirm their identity unless the proctor personally knows the student being tested. In order for a proctored exam grade to be recorded, a signed Proctor's Signature Form (PSF) must be sent to LU. The form is unnecessary in the case of ProctorU.

At LU students have several choices for completing proctored exams:

- A student can come to campus for an exam. The instructor will establish a specific campus classroom, date and time for the student to come to LU and complete the exam with the instructor or his or her representative.
- A student can utilize a Living Church of God church officer (i.e. elder, deacon or deaconess), or an appointed, minister-approved church leader. In the case of the latter, the minister should provide an email endorsing the appointed proctor.
- A student can use ProctorU online. ProctorU is a service that LU faculty may utilize for proctoring online exams. ProctorU allows students to conveniently and securely complete assigned exams using almost any webcam. With a computer and approved webcam, a student can take online exams at home, at work, or almost anywhere they have Internet access. ProctorU connects students directly to their proctor via webcam so they can both see and talk to one another. ProctorU can also monitor a student's computer while the student completes the exam. Students pay ProctorU directly for this service. LU does not reimburse students for proctoring fees incurred. To view a demo video on how this service works, or to sign up and schedule testing appointments, the Living University portal is located at www.proctoru.com/portal/livinguniv. For ProctorU no Proctor's Signature Form (PSF) is needed.
- A student can use a college or university testing center. There is usually a fee for this service. LU does not reimburse students for proctoring fees incurred.
- A student can have an approved proctor. This may be a school official, such as a teacher or registrar, or a librarian who is not related to the student.
- In a case of an unusual hardship a student may request an alternate arrangement. To do so please contact Mrs. Michelle Broussard at 704-708-2294.

Academic Irregularity

Students have the responsibility for conducting themselves in such a manner as to avoid any suspicion that they are improperly giving or receiving aid on any assignment or examination. An academic irregularity not only includes cheating but also includes plagiarism (taking another's ideas and/or words and presenting them as if they were the writer's own) and the submitting of the same paper in separate courses without prior consent from the faculty members concerned. In cases of suspected academic irregularity, faculty members may refuse to grade such papers or examinations, completely or in part, and to record each of them as a failure. If an academic irregularity is sufficiently serious, the University may take one or more of, but not limited to, the following actions:

1. Drop the student from the course with a grade of F;
2. Place the student on academic probation; and/or
3. Dismiss the student from the University.

Course Overview

All reading and viewing assignments are set forth in the lessons on the course website.

Lesson

Lesson 1 Introduction

- Topic 1 Background
- Topic 2 Apostolic Writings
- Topic 3 Gnosticism
- Topic 4 New Testament Exegesis
- [Icebreaker](#)
- [Lesson 1 Discussion](#)
- [Writing Assignment 1](#)
- [Quiz 1](#)

Lesson 2 James

- Topic 1 Background
- Topic 2 Word Study
- Topic 3 Enduring Trials and Faith
- Topic 4 Living Faith at Work
- [Lesson 2 Discussion](#)
- [Writing Assignment 2](#)
- [Quiz 2](#)

Lesson 3 1 Peter

- Topic 1 Background
- Topic 2 The Apostle Peter and Simon Magus
- Topic 3 Peter's Death and Burial
- Topic 4 1 Peter Chapters 1-5
- [Lesson 3 Discussion](#)
- [Writing Assignment 3](#)
- [Quiz 3](#)

Lesson 4 2 Peter

- Topic 1 Background
- Topic 2 Virtues 2 Peter 1:5-7
- Topic 3 Apostasy & Destructive Heresies
- Topic 4 Paul's Epistles Are Scripture
- [Lesson 4 Discussion](#)
- [Writing Assignment](#)
- [Quiz 4](#)

Exam 1 (Lessons 1-4)

Lesson 5 | John

Topic 1 Background

Topic 2 1, 2 & 3 John

Lesson 5 Discussion

Writing Assignment 5

Quiz 5

Lesson 6 Jude

Topic 1 Background

Topic 2 Jude

Topic 3 Canonical Issues

Lesson 6 Discussion

Writing Assignment 6

Quiz 6

Lesson 7 Revelation

Topic 1 Background and Introduction

Topic 2 The True and False Churches

Topic 3 The Day of the Lord

Topic 4 The Second Coming, Millennium, and Thereafter

Lesson 7 Discussion

Writing Assignment 7

Quiz 7

Exam 2 (Lessons 5-7)

Lesson 8 Epilog (December 6-22)

Closing Comment

Writing Assignment 8

Research Paper

Course Evaluation

Exam 3 (Lessons 1-8) PROCTORED
